

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 AGRE-00 USIA-06 AID-05 EB-07 AF-10 ARA-06
EA-07 EUR-12 NEA-10 COME-00 ISO-00 TRSE-00 L-03
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 NSAE-00 NSC-05
PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 /116 W
-----131048Z 097784 /10/23

R 121115Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4559
INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

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FODAG

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (EO, TAGS, SUBJECT ADDED)

PARIS FOR CIEC

EO 11652: NA
TAGS: UNWFC, EAGR, OCON
SUBJECT: WORLD FOOD COUNCIL PREPARATORY SESSION

1. SUMMARY: COLLISION WAS NARROWLY AVOIDED DURING THIRD DAY OF WFC PREPARATORY SESSION OVER G-77 PROPOSAL THAT A CONTACT GROUP SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED TO PREPARE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MINISTERIAL CONSIDERATION, USING AS INITIAL TEXT THEIR DRAFT ALTERNATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS. DEVELOPED COUNTRIES REFUSED TO ACCEDE TO THE PROPOSAL IN VIEW OF PAST UNFAVORABLE RECORD OF SUCH GROUPS IN WFC AND UNDESIRABLE FUTURE PRECEDENT, MAINTAINING INSTEAD THAT ALREADY ESTABLISHED RAPPORTEUR SHOULD ATTEMPT TO FOCUS DELIBERATIONS TO NARROW NUMBER OF UNRESOLVED ISSUES FOR MINISTERIAL CONSIDERATION AND THAT CONTACT GROUP SHOULD BE REVERTED TO ONLY IF THE NUMBER OF UNRESOLVED ISSUES REMAINED UNACCEPTABLY LARGE. G-77 ACCEPTED THIS POSITION AFTER CONSIDERABLE INTERNAL TURMOIL. ALTHOUGH PROCEDURAL
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QUESTION APPEARS TO BE OUT OF THE WAY, UNDERLYING PROBLEM OF WHETHER NUMBER OF ISSUES CAN IN FACT BE NARROWED REMAINS UNRESOLVED. END SUMMARY

2. UPON CONVENING OF THE THIRD DAY'S PLENARY SESSION, CHAIRMAN OF G-77 BRITO INTRODUCED A PROPOSAL THAT WFC PRESIDENT CONVENE A CONTACT GROUP TO CONSIDER G-77 RECOMMENDATIONS SUBMITTED AS ALTERNA-

TIVE TO THE SECRETARIAT DRAFTS. AUSTRALIA FOLLOWED IMMEDIATELY BY USA, STATED THAT PRESENT SYSTEM SHOULD BE MAINTAINED, I.E. THAT G-77 AND ANY OTHER PROPOSED CHANGES SHOULD BE SUBMITTED TO RAPPOREUR. RAPPOREUR, ASSISTED BY WORKING GROUP, WOULD THEN MERGE ALL CHANGES INTO A CONSOLIDATED DRAFT FOR PRESENTATION TO THE PLENARY SESSION. SUPPORT FOR WHAT BECAME RESPECTIVE DEVELOPED AND G-77 POSITIONS WAS EXPRESSED BY BANGLADESH, NIGERIA, PAKISTAN, TRINIDAD-TOBAGO, JAPAN, CUBA, GERMANY AND MEXICO. PRESIDENT DEFERRED THE ISSUED TO THE AFTERNOON SESSION, STATING CONSULTATIONS WOULD BE HELD WITH INTERESTED PARTIES DURING THE NOON BREAK.

3. DURING NOON BREAK, U.S. CONVENED INFORMAL DEVELOPED COUNTRY CAUCUS TO DISCUSS TACTICS. CAUCUS DECIDED THAT POSITION AGAINST CONTACT GROUP AS REPLACEMENT FOR RAPPOREUR SYSTEM WAS WELL FOUNDED IN VIEW OF UNFAVORABLE PAST HISTORY OF CONTACT GROUPS IN WFC SESSIONS AND FACT THAT ACCEDING TO CONTACT GROUPS WOULD ESTABLISH SUCH A SYSTEM IN FUTURE MEETINGS, INCLUDING IN ALL LIKELIHOOD MINISTERIAL SESSIONS. CAUCUS ALSO DECIDED TO OFFER G-77 COMPROMISE PROPOSAL THAT CONTACT GROUP WOULD BE PERMITTED IF THE NUMBER OF UNRESOLVED ISSUES REMAINING AFTER CONSOLIDATION OF POSITIONS BY RAPPOREUR WAS TOO LARGE TO PERMIT THEIR EFFICIENT DISPOSITION BY MINISTERS. CAUCUS POSITION WAS REPORTED TO WFC PRESIDENT BY US AND GERMANY.

4. DURING THE COURSE OF THE AFTERNOON SESSION, WFC PRESIDENT ANNOUNCED HE INTENDED TO FORM GROUP "WHICH WOULD ENABLE THE COUNCIL TO ARRIVE AT A CONSENSUS" ON CONTENT OF PREPARATORY MEETING RECOMMENDATIONS. GROUP NAMED WAS TO BE COMPOSED OF WFC BURUEA, GROUP-77 REPRESENTATIVES AND THREE DEVELOPED COUNTRY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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REPRESENTATIVES TO THE MINISTERIAL SESSION. US DELEGATE IMMEDIATELY OBJECTED, STATED US COULD NOT PARTICIPATE IN CONTACT GROUP WHICH REPLACED RAPPOREUR SYSTEM, OFFERED COMPROMISE ON CONTACT GROUP WORKED OUT IN DEVELOPED COUNTRY CAUCUS (BUT QUESTIONED DISTRIBUTION OF GROUP PROPOSED BY PRESIDENT) AND CALLED FOR RECESSSSO THAT PROBLEM COULD BE WORKED OUT IN PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS WITH PRESIDENT.

5. SESSION RECONVENED AFTER A SHORT TIME AND WFC PRESIDENT ANNOUNCED HE HAD BEEN UNABLE TO RECONCILE THE TWO POSITIONS. WFC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR HANNAH SPOKE BRIEFLY, STRESSING SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES WHICH WOULD ENSUE IF WHAT HE CALLED "A STRICLY PROCEDURAL ISSUE" PREVENTED SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION OF PREPARATORY GROUP MEETING. US REPRESENTATIVE DISAGREED THAT ISSUE WAS SIMPLY ONE OF PROCEDURE; STRESSING THAT IMPORTANT ROLE OF RAPPOREUR WAS TO FOCUS ISSUES SO THAT THEY COULD BE HANDLED BY MINISTERS, A ROLE WHICH COULD NOT BE ASSUMED BY CONTACT GROUP WORKING ON THE BASIS OF DISPARATE G-77 DRAFT. MEETING WAS ADJOURNED TO PERMIT G-77 CAUCUS.

6. MEETING RECONVENED AFTER AN HOUR. G-77 SPOKESMAN BRITO STATED HIS GROUP WOULD ACCEPT WORKING WITH RAPPORTEUR ON CONDITIONS THAT COMPOSITION OF RAPPORTEUR'S GROUP MAINTAINED EQUITABLE COMPOSITION AT ALL TIMES, THAT ANY ISSUES DELETED BY RAPPORTEUR'S GROUP COULD BE RAISED AGAIN ON PLENARY FLOOR, AND THAT DECISION BE MADE IMMEDIATELY TO FORM CONTACT GROUP FOR NARROWING ISSUES. U.S. REPRESENTATIVE WELCOMED G-77 PROPOSAL BUT RETURNED TO THE PROBLEM OF CONTACT GROUP'S COMPOSITION. DURING AND IMMEDIATELY AFTER SESSION PRESIDENT ATTEMPTED TO RESOLVE COMPOSITION BY ADDING JAPAN TO GROUP AND MAINTAINING THAT ROLE OF BUREAU (COMPOSED OF MEMBERS FROM EGYPT, USSR, BANGLADESH, MEXICO AND UK) SHOULD BE NEUTRAL. WHILE US DELEGATION EXPRESSED WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT THIS PROPOSAL THERE WERE SOME LINGERING DOUBTS BY OTHER DEVELOPED COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVES WHICH ARE EXPECTED TO BE RESOLVED BY COMMENCEMENT OF FOURTH DAY'S SESSION.

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7. THIS FLAREUP IS BEING REPORTED IN SOME DETAIL TO GIVE WASHINGTON A BETTER FEEL FOR SESSION ATMOSPHERICS, AND TO RECORD CAREFULLY THE PROCEEDINGS IN THE EVENT ISSUE ARISES AGAIN IN FUTURE. DELEGATION INTERPRETS G-77 RESPONSE AS A FACE-SAVING CAVEIN AND WFC SESSION'S IMMEDIATE CRISIS APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN AVERTED. HOWEVER, OUTCOME OF UNDERLYING ISSUE IS STILL IN DOUBTS I.E., WHETHER G-77 CAN ASSIGN PRIORITIES TO A CATALOGUE OF DEMANDS EXCEEDING EVEN THOSE ON SAME TOPIC AS CIEC TO PERMIT REFERAL OF ONLY A SMALL NUMBER OF THE MOST IMPORTANT FOR CONSIDERATION BY MINISTERS.GARDNER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETING REPORTS, COMMITTEE MEETINGS, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
Control Number: n/a
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Sent Date: 12-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
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Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Page Count: 3
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Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Reference: n/a
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Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
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Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2547637
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: WORLD FOOD COUNCIL PREPARATORY SESSION
TAGS: OCON, EAGR, EAID, IT, XX, WFC, UNWFC
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/b3cdb695-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009